

Choice Poetry.

From *Charles' Magazine*.

TO CHARLES SUMNER.

IN MEMORIAM.

BY W. W. RYAN.

For years, dear friend, but rarely had we met;
 Fate in a different path our lives had set;
 Space stretched between us, yet you still were near,
 And friendship had no shadow of regret.

The ocean divide us, but I thought of you;
 Obscured the interchange of word and thought;
 The unbroken line of sympathy still thrived,
 And into both its constant message brought.

And so I felt you were not far away—
 The mortal distance seemed to lay
 "Brief truce to our meeting, and I dreamed
 That some day we should meet, and you and I—
 And I, in years past, we plotted and we planned.

That again should each other's hand
 Speak, as of old, and face to face should stand;
 And the past, and face to face should stand;
 And the past, and face to face should stand;
 And the past, and face to face should stand;

That hope is vanished now—a sudden change
 Hath been from me, far beyond the range
 Of that familiar life that we knew,
 Into a region dim, and far, and strange.

A cancer now divides us—no—no—no—
 Across whose space we vainly strive to reach;
 How deep a pain passes never to return,
 From whose far shores there comes no human speech.

In one swift moment all we passed and gone
 On the blind way all must tread alone;
 Accompanied, unfriended, none knows where;
 Gone into the vast, the unknown, the drear.

Gone where no mortal soul can track your flight—
 Gone where Faith casts a weak and wavering light;
 Where truthing Hope and Fear bewildered stray,
 Lost in the pathless, the uncharted, the gray.

Vanished forever from this world away,
 From the accidents of Night and Day,
 Yet still the change is wrought in the soul of man,
 And in his life's passion, joy, hope, pain, and play.

Gone in an instant, like a breath of wind,
 Leaving the dead, dumb instrument behind;
 Through which the spirit, the soul, the mind,
 Thrilled its life harmonies of sense and mind.

Gone—what has gone, and what has he left?
 What means this dreadful utterance—has he died?
 What is this strange, this terrible, this sad?
 That kindest soul to sense by such slight threat?

Love's grasp is strong, and yet it could not hold
 The one that it held, and that it held;
 And now it is left to follow where it fled,
 And seek to earth, the secret all it held.

Where and what are you now? What do you know,
 See, feel? Is that what you so dark below?
 "Cloned up at last," you say, "no more I remain,
 And you long for me that I have been slain?"

In this new life does human feeling last?
 Or has oblivion blotted out the Past?
 All the glad joys of life, the love, the care,
 And all the lights and shadows of our share?

Or are you nothing more—a light that glows
 That glows in silence, and that glows;
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care,
 And all the lights and shadows of our share?

To all these questions come a silence, dear—
 A silence that is not a silence, but a fear;
 The still soul listens, but no answer comes,
 Save the low heart-beats of its hope or dream.

So we return to earth—no laugh and weep,
 No tears to tell of love and of despair;
 Returns to earth—no laugh and weep,
 No tears to tell of love and of despair;

No matter what it brings—at least it tells
 A peaceful charm of love and of despair;
 Why should we wish to tell and struggle more?
 Why should we wish to tell and struggle more?

Look at this face, where death has laid its hand,
 How calm it looks, how calm it looks;
 Life's fever over, all the passions dead,
 All the joys and sorrows, all the joys and sorrows;

And yet—what was it never so close to pain,
 How close it was to pain, how close it was;
 Come back, we cry, no never—no—no—
 And yet it was so close to pain, how close it was;

That patient memory glowed with treasures fair,
 That stored experience rich with learning rare;
 Those gathered thoughts, those thoughts that were,
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

Seek as you will—Mind creature—never eye
 Of mortal man shall pierce this mystery;
 This, this alone we know, that mystery we know,
 And yet we feel—this alone we know, that mystery we know;

Change it may suffer—vanish from our sight,
 In forms beyond our ken to disappear;
 But the faintest gleam of love and of despair,
 The faintest gleam of love and of despair;

But death—black nothing!—at the very thought,
 Reason recoils—Faith shudders—Hope, distraught,
 Reels back against the wall of life and death,
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

To see what, vague and dim, how it is,
 The soul must cling—clings black in night;
 And here, at least, Hope, Reason, Faith give scope,
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

Then, why with nightmare dreams our spirits scare?
 If we will dream—no wonder and more fair;
 Hope's promise, Faith's assurance, Reason's glow,
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

So will dream, dream nothing we can know,
 Your soul, your soul, your soul, your soul;
 On our dream, on our dream, on our dream,
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

That old tender memory, tender, true,
 As who were there, as who were there;
 Not mourning for us as we mourn for her,
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

But, passing by Time, your spirit large grows
 In dream, in dream, in dream, in dream;
 On, on, on, on, on, on, on, on,
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

And if it is a dream—no let it be;
 Who shall decide between the dream and we?
 And yet I rather choose this heavenly dream,
 Than death's dark horror of reality.

At least your noble thoughts can never die—
 They live to stir and to inspire;
 They live to awaken life and cheer us on;
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

Yes, in our memory, long as sense remains,
 That steadfast friend, that voice, whose strains
 To lofty purposes, that voice, whose strains
 And all the glad joys of life, the love, the care;

That full, warm voice, whose high strong key
 We tuned to melody in our life;
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 From the deep, from the deep, from the deep;

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 That kindest soul to sense by such slight threat?

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 The one that it held, and that it held;
 And now it is left to follow where it fled,
 And seek to earth, the secret all it held.

Where and what are you now? What do you know,
 See, feel? Is that what you so dark below?
 "Cloned up at last," you say, "no more I remain,
 And you long for me that I have been slain?"

In this new life does human feeling last?
 Or has oblivion blotted out the Past?
 All the glad joys of life, the love, the care,
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Or are you nothing more—a light that glows
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 A silence that is not a silence, but a fear;
 The still soul listens, but no answer comes,
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So we return to earth—no laugh and weep,
 No tears to tell of love and of despair;
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No matter what it brings—at least it tells
 A peaceful charm of love and of despair;
 Why should we wish to tell and struggle more?
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 All the joys and sorrows, all the joys and sorrows;

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 How close it was to pain, how close it was;
 Come back, we cry, no never—no—no—
 And yet it was so close to pain, how close it was;

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 That stored experience rich with learning rare;
 Those gathered thoughts, those thoughts that were,
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 This, this alone we know, that mystery we know,
 And yet we feel—this alone we know, that mystery we know;

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